

**In the Claims:**

Please cancel claims 1-15 without prejudice to the prosecution of said claims in a continuing application.

Please add following new claims 16-41.

16. (New) A topical composition for treating cutaneous stress containing as active principle a substance that binds to the peripheral benzodiazepine receptors.

17. (New) A composition according to Claim 16 wherein the substance that binds to the peripheral benzodiazepine receptor is a peripheral benzodiazepine receptor agonist chosen from synthetic molecules, natural extraction substances and substances obtained by fermentation.

18. (New) A composition according to Claim 17 wherein the substance that binds to the peripheral benzodiazepine receptor is RO 5-4864. - see page 2

19. (New) A composition according to Claim 17 wherein the substance that binds to the peripheral benzodiazepine receptor is obtained by fermentation.

20. (New) A composition according to Claim 19 wherein the substance that binds to the peripheral benzodiazepine receptor is a fermentation product of Nocardia SRL 4988, Streptomyces SRL 5186 or Actinosynnema SRL 5189.

21. (New) A composition according to Claim 17 wherein the substance that binds to the peripheral benzodiazepine receptor is present in an amount of from 0.00001% to 20% by weight relative to the total weight of the composition.

22. (New) A composition according to Claim 21 wherein the substance that binds to the peripheral benzodiazepine receptor is present in an amount of from 0.001% to 10% by weight relative to the total weight of the composition.

23. (New) A composition according to Claim 17 additionally containing a hydroxy acid or a retinoid.

24. (New) A composition according to Claim 23 wherein the hydroxy acid is chosen from  $\alpha$ -hydroxy acids and  $\beta$ -hydroxy acids which may be linear, branched or cyclic, saturated or unsaturated.

25. (New) A composition according to Claim 23 wherein the retinoid is chosen from retinoic acid and derivatives thereof, and retinol and esters thereof.

26. (New) A method for the treatment of cutaneous stress which comprises topically administering to a subject in need of such treatment an effective amount of a substance that binds to the peripheral benzodiazepine receptor.

27. (New) A method for the treatment of cutaneous stress which comprises topically administering to a subject in need of such treatment an effective amount of a composition according to Claim 17.

28. (New) A method for the treatment of cutaneous stress which comprises topically administering to a subject in need of such treatment an effective amount of a composition according to Claim 18.

29. (New) A method for the treatment of cutaneous stress which comprises topically administering to a subject in need of such treatment an effective amount of a composition according to Claim 19.

30. (New) A method for the treatment of cutaneous stress which comprises topically administering to a subject in need of such treatment an effective amount of a composition according to Claim 20.

31. (New) A method for the treatment of cutaneous stress which comprises topically administering to a subject in need of such treatment an effective amount of a composition according to Claim 21.

32. (New) A method for the treatment of cutaneous stress which comprises topically administering to a subject in need of such treatment an effective amount of a composition according to Claim 22.

33. (New) A method for the treatment of cutaneous stress which comprises topically administering to a subject in need of such treatment an effective amount of a composition according to Claim 23.

34. (New) A method for the treatment of cutaneous stress which comprises topically administering to a subject in need of such treatment an effective amount of a composition according to Claim 24.

35. (New) A method for the treatment of cutaneous stress which comprises topically administering to a subject in need of such treatment an effective amount of a composition according to Claim 25.

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36. (New) A method for reducing wrinkles, reducing solar erythema or protecting against free radicals which comprises topically administering to a subject in need of such treatment an effective amount of a composition according to Claim 17.

37. (New) A method for reducing wrinkles, reducing solar erythema or protecting against free radicals which comprises topically administering an effective amount of a composition according to Claim 18.

38. (New) A method for reducing wrinkles, reducing solar erythema or protecting against free radicals which comprises topically administering an effective amount of a composition according to Claim 20.

39. (New) Strain *Nocardia species* SRL 4988 filed at the C.N.C.M. of the Institut Pasteur under No. I-2305 and its productive mutants.

40. (New) Strain *Streptomyces species* SRL 5186 filed at the C.N.C.M. of the Institut Pasteur under No. I-2306 and its productive mutants.

41. (New) Strain *Actinosynnema species* SRL 5189 filed at the C.N.C.M. of the Institut Pasteur under No. I-2307 and its productive mutants.--

mutually  
excl.  
each from  
the other

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